

October 29, 2010

Improved Streetscape Will Lead to Increased Tourism and Economic Development in Village

HERKIMER, NY-Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) joined Mayor Mark Ainsworth and members of the Herkimer Village Board and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Region 2 Director Mike Shamma to highlight the Mohawk Street Beautification Project, which was funded by an \$800,000 Transportation Enhancement Program grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Bill).

"This funding for the Mohawk Street Beautification Project is another example of the Recovery Bill delivering for our local communities," **said Arcuri, a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure**. "As the gateway into the village and business district, as well as the beginning of the Southern Adirondack Trail, this improved streetscape will lead to increased tourism and economic development in the area, benefiting local residents and businesses."

NYSDOT Regional Director Mike Shamma said, "The enhancement project we celebrate today has made a significant improvement to the streetscape in the village of Herkimer. In addition to the improved drainage and pedestrian facilities, this project provides landscaping and period lighting along this gateway to the village. I am pleased to work so closely with Congressman Arcuri and our local officials to enhance this historic and beautiful community."

Village of Herkimer Mayor Mark Ainsworth said, "The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has worked and here in Herkimer we can see the impact first hand with the Mohawk Street Beautification Project. Investing in local communities is the best way to stimulate positive growth and recovery in reshaping the future. The Mohawk Street Project will set the tone for community revitalization, giving a positive first impression to those entering our village as well as to those residing here bringing a renewed sense of pride to our community."

Village of Herkimer Deputy Mayor Gary Hartman said, "This is a shining example of what can be accomplished when local, state, and federal officials work toward a common goal. It also exemplifies the positive impact that Recovery Act funding can have on a region's short-term economy by putting local workers to work, along with the long-term economic benefits of needed & long-lasting improvements to our infrastructure. Congressman Arcuri's advice and advocacy was pivotal in ensuring that our small village received the funding to complete this project which would have otherwise been beyond our reach"

The project, which is nearing completion, includes replacement of concrete sidewalks and curbs, replacement of drainage structures, frame and grate replacement and rehabilitation, installation of landscaping consisting of street trees and grass medians, providing period lighting improvements along Mohawk Street between South Caroline Street and South Main Street in the Village of Herkimer.

The current streetscape along Mohawk Street is extremely blighting, and detracts from the traveling and tourism experience both walking and by car. The improvement of Mohawk Street is especially important in that this street serves as the main gateway into the village linking the downtown business district with the NYS Thruway (Interchange 30) and the Erie Canal.

The road is also part of the Southern Adirondack Trail - a New York State Scenic Byway and Tourism Trail that begins at the NYS Thruway and extends north into the Adirondack State Park, and which links with the Adirondack and Central Adirondack Trails.

The project will eliminate blighted conditions along the first half mile of the Scenic Byway and complement completed streetscape improvements along Main Street and connect to similar future improvements along Albany Street.

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